

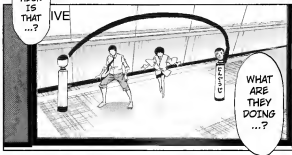
CHAPTER 15:
THE CHOICEST
CHOICE

I'LL TELL
SOMETHING
ESPECIALLY
TO YOU WHO
HAVE WON
THE FIRST
AUDITION...

THE
REASON
WHY YOU
ALL HAVE
BEEN
GATHERED
HERE!



AO-
YAMA
!!!





HE'S
A BEST
FRIEND OF
MINE WHO
WENT TO
THE SAME
SCHOOL
AS ME.



OH...
HE'S MY
FRIEND.

IT SAYS
IT'S A LIVE
BROADCAST,
SO HE'S
STILL
ALIVE!!



WHAT
?



THE
OPPOSITE
OF YOU
AS IT
WERE.

THE PEOPLE
YOU SEE
HERE ARE
THOSE WHO
PROPERLY
WENT TO
SCHOOL.



AND
THIS
IS THAT
PERSON
...

TA-
DAA!!

?!



HOWEVER,
JUST LIKE
YOU, THEY
ARE BEING
SCREENED
BY A
CERTAIN
PERSON.

KAMIMARO



HIS
NAME IS
"KAMIMARO
KAMINO-
KOUJI."

ME



LIVE



AND HE IS
PERFORMING
THE SELECTION
PROCESS IN
HIS OWN
WAY.

THE STUDENTS
WHO ARE BEING
TESTED BY HIM
ARE CALLED
"GOD'S
CHILDREN"...

THOSE
WHO
DID NOT
GO TO
SCHOOL

YOU,
WHO ARE
CHOSEN
BY ME,
SEIN
KAMI...



IN
CONTRAST,
I AM IN
CHARGE
OF THE
AUDITION
FOR YOU...



ARE
"KAMI'S
JR."



LIVE



WE'RE
PLANNING
THE
DEBUT
EVENT...

AND AFTER
A FEW
PEOPLE
HAVE BEEN
SELECTED
OVER THERE
AND A FEW
OVER HERE..

HE'S
THE
ONE
WHO'S
ALIVE!!

NO,
IDIOT
!!

WAS
THE
ONE
WHO
JUST
DIED
AO-
YAMA?

BEFORE
LONG,
THERE
WILL
BE A
BATTLE
WHICH
THEY
ABSO-
LUTELY
MUST
NOT
LOSE!!



THOSE
WHO
HAVE
BEEN
SELECTED

COMING **VS.** SOON



"GOD'S
CHILDREN"
VS.
"KAMI'S JR."

...

IN
WHICH
YOU
WILL
FIGHT!



WHA
...?!









**I'M
GONNA
LIVE, NO
MATTER
WHAT
!!!**

**I
HAVE
TO
SEE
HIM...**

**THERE'S
SOME-
THING
I HAVE TO
APOLOGIZE
FOR...**

**I'LL
APOLO-
GIZE
AND
WE'LL
PLAY
SOCCER
AGAIN**
...



**BLAST
IT!**

**SO
I
CAN'T
DIE...**

**I
CAN'T
DIE...**



**I'LL BE THE
BEST PASSER
IN THE WORLD.**
KAKASHI

**I'LL BE THE
BEST STRIKER
IN THE WORLD.**
NARUKA

**I
JUST
CAN'T
DIE...**

I...



DON'T PANIC!
I KNOW YOU
ARE ALL
ANXIOUS TO
BEGIN THE
NEXT EVENT...

AND NOW,
I WOULD LIKE
TO MOVE ON
TO THE NEXT
AUDITION...



TO GET
YOU IN THE
MOOD FOR
FUN AND
GAMES.

BUT
LET'S
HAVE A
LITTLE
TIME TO
THINK...

YOU CAN
HEAR THE
SOOTHING
SOUND OF
BELLS,
RIGHT?

THAT WAS A
KEYWORD FOR THE
ORDER OF THE
AUDITIONS...
BUT DID ANYONE
NOTICE?

DO YOU
REMEMBER ME
TELLING YOU THIS
IS "SHIRI-TORI"*
A WHILE AGO?

PLEASE
THINK
CAREFULLY
ABOUT ALL
THAT HAS
HAPPENED
TO YOU UP
TO NOW.

NOT
AT
ALL...

DID
YOU
NO-
TICE?

AH!

HE
DID
SAY
THAT.

LET
THE
SHIRI-
TORI
BEGIN!

*JAPANESE WORD-CHAIN GAME WHERE THE
LAST SYLLABLE OF A WORD IS USED TO BEGIN
THE NEXT WORD.

"KIDU-TIMORING", A PUNIFICATION
RITUAL, PRECEDED DURING THE
SPRING FESTIVAL.

YOU
DEFEATED
THE
DEMONS
IN "MAME-
MAKI"...

"TODOROKU", A MIGHTY
BALL USED AT PARTIES
USUALLY CONTAINING
COMEDY AND STREAKERS.

YOU HAD AN
UNEXPECTED
VISIT BY
"NINOMIYA,
KINJIROU
SONTOKU"...

I USED A
"KUSU-
DAMA"
TO KICK
OFF THE
AUDITION...

A PROMINENT 19TH-CENTURY JAPANESE AESTHETIC TASTE LEADER,
PHILOSOPHER, MATERIALIST AND ECOLOGIST. STATUES OF HIM ARE OFTEN
FOUND IN JAPANESE SCHOOLS. HE WAS AWARDED THE NAME "SONTOKU"
FOR HIS ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

NINOMIYA,
KINJIROU
SONTOKU...
"KU"...KUSU-
DAMA...
"MA"...

OH...
IT'S
LIKE
SHIRI-
TORI!!

LUNCH
(KYUU-
SHOKU)...
"KU"...
NEXT IS
"KU"...?

MAME-
MAKI
...
"KI"
...

LOOK
OUT-
SIDE!!

SEEMS
LIKE
HE'S
HERE!

HEY,
LOOK
AT
THAT!!

AH!

WHAT'S
THAT?!

THEN
YOU HAD
A SCHOOL
LUNCH
(KYUU-
SHOKU)...

JINGLE
JINGLE

IT'S
ALSO THE
MEANING
OF THESE
BELLS...

THIS IS
A BIG
HINT
ABOUT
WHAT'S
COMING
NEXT.



to
you!!

SANTA
CLAUS
?!



WHAT
IS
THAT
?!

BIZZ...

AND
SEE FOR
YOUR-
SELVES.
GOOD
LUCK!



AND NOW,
EVERYONE
PLEASE GO
OUTSIDE....



Ho
Ho
Ho
Hello!

Merry
Christ-
mas

JINGLE





BUT YOU
DON'T
GET TO
CHOOSE
RIGHT
AWAY.

WE'LL
EXPLAIN
IN
DETAIL
TO
YOU.

?!
HIS FACE
CHANGED
?!
?

SPIN!!
Guh!!



FIRST
OF
ALL...

THE
PRESENTS
CONTAIN
TICKETS
FOR THE
EXAMS.

YOU
WILL
CHOOSE
ONE OF
THE THREE
TESTS TO
TAKE.

THERE
ARE 98
TOTAL
PEOPLE
HERE.

HIS
MOOD
CHANG-
ED?

WHAT
KIND
OF
SANTA
IS
THIS?

YOU ARE
FATED TO
SEPARATE
INTO THREE
TEAMS OF
36, 32,
AND 30.



YO HO HO!
THE TYPE
OF EXAM IS
DIFFERENT
AT EACH OF
THE THREE
TESTING
LOCATIONS...

AND
SO...

THE
NUMBER
OF PEOPLE
WHO CLEAR
WILL BE
DIFFERENT
AS WELL.

NOW,
ALLOW
US TO
EXPLAIN
THE THREE
TESTS.

HO
HO
HO!

HE
CHANGED
AGAIN...



THE
FIRST
IS THE
**"MUSICAL
CHAIRS"**
EXAM IN
THE MUSIC
ROOM.

THERE
ARE 36
SPACES
AVAILABLE,
AND AT
MOST 18
WILL
PASS.



THE
SECOND IS THE
**"SAND-
COLLECTING"**
EXAM IN CLASS-
ROOM 3-B.

THERE
ARE 32
SPACES,
AND AT
MOST
24 WILL
PASS.



IT HAS
30 SPACES,
AND AT
MOST 10
WILL PASS.

HO
HO
HO!

THEN,
THE THIRD
EXAM IS
IN THE
GYM.

IT'S THE
"CAT'S
CRADLE"
EXAM.

*This is
the choice
that will
change
your
destiny.*

*These
are the
three
options
that will
divide
you.*



FIRST
COME,
FIRST
SERVED!
IF WE'RE
SOLD OUT,
YOU'RE
OUTTA
LUCK!

NOW,
CHOOSE!
CHOOSE!
THE
CHOICEST
CHOICE!

DA-DUN

These
are the
3-faced
Santa's
"Christmas
presents"

!!*

DUN

DUN

DUN

DUN

DUN

*WE USED THE JAPANESE PRONUNCIATION MAKING IT
"ROMUNASU PURENTO" AND INDICATING THAT
THIS IS THE NEXT WORD IN THE SHIN-TORI GAME.

CHAPTER 16:
EENY MEENY
MINY MOE

You will
choose
your next
audition
from among
these three
choices.

DA-DUN

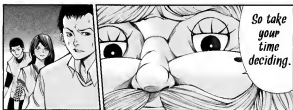
These
are the
3-faced
Santa's
"Christmas
presents"
!!



However,
it is
already
very late.



A
CHOICE
BETWEEN
"MUSICAL
CHAIRS,"
"SAND-
COLLECT-
ING," AND
"CAT'S
CRADLE"
!!









WHAT'S
WRONG
?

UH...
HEY
...



RUI-
...
CHAN
?



IT'S
FUN,
HUH?



SORRY,
IT'S
NOTH-
ING...

OH...
UM...

HUH
?



NO
COMPLAINTS
ABOUT THAT,
RIGHT?

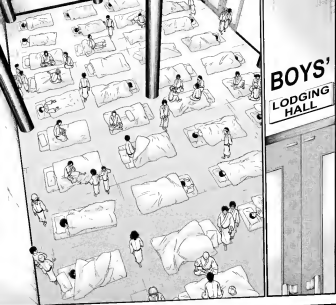
HEY...
THEN LET'S
HAVE A
RUN-OFF
BETWEEN
MUSICAL
CHAIRS
AND SAND-
COLLECT-
ING.

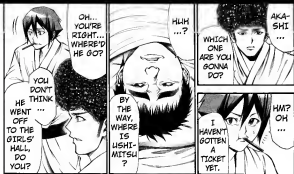
...

IT'S
NOTH-
ING!!

CRY
BABY
?









THE
GIRLS'
HALL
...?



WHICH
WAY IS
THE
GIRLS'
HALL?

I'VE GOT
NO IDEA...
SHOULD
I GO ASK
SANTA?

ANYWAY,
GOTTA
RINSE
MY MOUTH.

SHOULD
BRUSH



'KAY.'

I'M
GONNA
GO
LOOK
FOR
HIM!

HEY,
AREN'T
YOU
GONNA
BRUSH
YOUR
TEETH?

YOU'LL
GET
CAVI-
TIES.

MURBLE
MURBLE



BOYS'
HALL

SIINGING
SKIILLS♪



AH...
RUI-
CHAN
?!

FGAH-



YOU'VE
GOT
SNOT
COMING
OUT!

DID I
SCARE
YOU?
SORRY,
SORRY!

BLEW!



MEI-CHAN
WENT
RIGHT TO
SLEEP, SO
I'VE GOT
NOTHING
TO DO.



NOPE,
I
HAVEN'T.



OH,
HAVE
YOU
SEEN
USHI-
MITSU?

JEEZ...
I
THOUGHT
YOU
WERE
SEEN
KAMI!



SURE
...



DO
YOU
WANNA
TALK
FOR A
BIT?

COME
HANG
OUT
WITH
ME!



Very well.

I WANT TO CHANGE TOO.

...

UM, I WANT SAND-COLLECTING INSTEAD OF MUSICAL CHAIRS.

HAVE YOU DECIDED, RUI-CHAN?

YEAH ...

I GUESS EVERY-ONE'S STILL UNSURE ABOUT WHAT TO CHOOSE.

IT'S YOUR OWN LIFE YOU'RE RISKING AFTER ALL.

IT'S THE KIND OF THING YOU SHOULD CARE ABOUT, RIGHT?

HM... I DON'T KNOW.



HLH ?

MY OWN LIFE...

I GUESS I DON'T REALLY CARE WHICH ONE I DO.



THE
TRUTH IS
I WAS
PLANNING
ON DYING.

YOU
KNOW
WHAT
?

HUH
?



AND I'D
STARTED
NOT TO
CARE
ABOUT
ANYTHING
...

THERE
WASN'T
ANYTHING
FUN
ABOUT
LIVING
...



SO
THAT'S
WHY I
DON'T
CARE
WHICH
ONE I
CHOOSE.



I ONLY
WENT
WITH HIM
BECAUSE
SOMEHOW
IT SEEMED
INTEREST-
ING.

AND
THEN
NINO
CAME
TO ME
...



THINGS
NOW
ARE SO
MUCH
MORE
FUN...

THAN
THAT
EVERYDAY
EXISTENCE
WHERE
I WAS
THINKING
OF
KILLING
MYSELF.



THEN
GOD
IS NOT
SUCH
A BIG
DEAL.



IF DEATH
IS ALL
HE HAS TO
THREATEN
US
WITH...





OKAY.

LET'S
DO
THAT.

DON'T
DO THAT!
THAT WAY
IS NO
FUN!

AH,
WHAT
TO
DO
...?

BUT IN THE
END, WE
DON'T KNOW
THE DETAILS
OF ANY OF
THEM, SO
CAP'S CRADLE
IS STILL A
POSSIBILITY,
HUH?

BY PROCESS OF
ELIMINATION, YES
WOULD PASS SAND-
COLLECTING, BUT ON
THE OTHER HAND,
MAYBE WE
SHOULD GO WITH
MUSICAL CHAIRS
WHERE WE KNOW
THE RULES TO
SOME EXTENT...

GOOD!

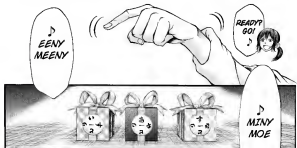
SO
WHICH
DO WE
TAKE?



...FUN?

"EENY
MEENY
MINY
MOE"?

HOW
ABOUT
WE
DECIDE
WITH...





♪
AS
THE
GODS

♪
WILL
...

LOVE
IS
OVER.

HEY,
KIYO-
SHE-
ROU
...

MOBIE
WANTS
TO GO
AGAIN
♡

THE
NEXT
DAY

**BUT
I GOT
CAT'S
CRADLE?!**

**WHAA-
AAAT?!
SAND-
COLLECT-
ING?!**

CAT'S

**WAAH!!
わー!!**

**NOOOO
WAAAAY!!
I WANT
TO BE
WITH
AKASHI-
TTTT!!**

**BUT
YOU
WERE
ASLEEP.**

**OH,
SOR-
RY.**

**WHY
DIDN'T
YOU
TELL
ME?!**

SAND

**PLEASE
!!**

**WAAH!!
わー!!**

**EXCUSE
ME! WILL
SOMEONE
TRADE
WITH ME!!**

**WHAT'S
WITH
THIS
GIRL?!**

**HUH
?!**

...

**WHERE
IS
MOEMI
?**

**I
HAVENT
SEEN
HER...**

CAT'S

CAT'S

MUSICAL



*Please
welcome
the
examiners
...*

TA-DA!

*KIP...
KA-PAP...*

*who will
administer
the three
exams
you all
have
chosen!*

**MON-
KEYS
!!!**



*These are
your next
examiners.*

*The
adorable
three wise
monkeys!*

AND
"KIKAZARU,"
HEAR-NO-EVIL...?!

"MIZARU,"
SEE-NO-EVIL...

"IWAZARU,"
SPEAK-NO-EVIL...





SORRY,
I'VE
NEVER
HEARD OF
THEM.

WHOA?!
FOR
REAL?!
100 Y.A.
MISSED
SCHOOL
TOOP!

THEY
ARE
SO
HOT!!



...

THEY'RE A BAND!!
A REALLY
POPULAR, YOUNG
AND TALENTED,
NO. 1 BAND!!

"100 YEARS AFTER"
OR "100 Y.A." FOR
SHORT!!

DON'T
FLIP
OUT,
MOSES!

JUST GIVE
HER A LITTLE
SMILE AND
WAVE!

TCH.

DON'T
EXPOSE US!
THAT GIRL...
SHE'S GONNA
DRAW
ATTENTION
TO US!



WELL,
THEY
GIVE
US AN
ALPH-
GROWNY
P.L.S.

HEY,
NOAH
!!

YOU'RE
STILL
CARRYING
THAT
AROUND?

I
WON-
DER
IF I
CAN
USE
THIS?

WHAT
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT,
JUDY?

IT'LL BE
CANCELLED
FOR
SURE,
RIGHT?

ANY-
WAY,
BAND
LEADER,

WHAT'S
GONNA
HAPPEN
TO THE
TOUR?



HEH,
HEH...
GOOD
ONE...

...
OH?

OH?

POING
POING



HUH
?

HA
HA
HA HA!
GO
TAKE
A LOOK,
MOSES
!!

DID IT
WORK?
IS HE
DEAD?!



HEY,
HEY!
FOR
REAL
?!

DID I
CLEAR?
AM I A
GENIUS
?



THE
EXAM
IS
ABOUT
TO
BEGIN.



FOR THIS
AUDITION,
THE 32 OF
YOU WILL
BE DIVIDED
INTO 4
GROUPS.

MOSES
WAS
SPLIT
IN
TWO...

MOSES
FR...

THE
SEATS ARE
DIVIDED
INTO
GROUPS
OF 8.

ONCE WE
REACH THE
CLASSROOM,
YOU WILL FIRST
SIT IN THE
SEAT NUMBER
WRITTEN ON
YOUR TICKET.

Look... **STRANGE...**

THE SAND-
COLLECTING THAT
YOU WILL NOW DO
IS ALSO KNOWN
BY THE NAME
"CRUMBLING
SAND
MOUNTAIN."







THE
SAND-
COLLECT-
ING
EXAM!!

THIS
IS...

THE
WHITE SQUID
WILL BE
SQUASHED

NOW THEN,
YOU WILL
CHOOSE
THE SAND-
COLLECTOR
FOR THE
FIRST
ROUND.

ONE
PERSON
FROM EACH
MOUNTAIN
WILL
VOLUNTEER!



HUH
?



?



HURRY UP
OR I'LL
BEAT THE
SHIT
OUTTA
YA!

IF
YOU'RE
GONNA
DO IT,
RAISE
YOUR
HAND!!!

"THE
WHITE
SQUID
WILL BE
SQUASHED."
WHAT'S
THAT
MEAN?



"SAND-
COLLECTOR"?
IS THAT THE
PERSON
PLAYING...?



HEY, THE
SOUTH
MOUNTAIN
IS THE
ONLY ONE
LEFT!!

EACH
PLAYER
WILL TAKE
AS LITTLE
SAND AS
POSSIBLE
AND WE'LL
MOVE ON TO
THE NEXT
PLAYER.

THIS IS
A TEAM
BATTLE OF
COLLEC-
TIVE
RESPON-
SIBILITY.

OKAY,
THEN!
I'LL
GO!!



HURRY
AND
DECIDE,
YOU
PUNKS
!!

IT
LOOKS
LIKE
THIS'LL
BE A
WAR OF
ATTRI-
TION.









NOW...

?!!
!!

YOU
WILL
TAKE
THE
SAND.



AKA-SSHI !!!

!!!

AKASHI-KUN!!!

HUH ?

KA-CHAK

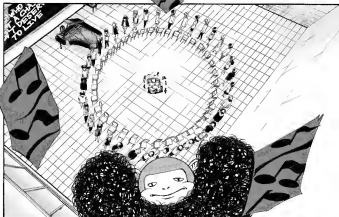
HUH ...?

YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING... SERIOUSLY ...?!

WHAT IS THIS ...?!

THOSE WHO CAN'T
GET A CHAIR
DON'T DESERVE
TO LIVE

MUSIC
ROOM



HOW THE
HECK ARE WE
SUPPOSED
TO KNOW
WHEN TO
SIT DOWN?!!

MUSICAL
CHAIRS
WHERE YOU
CAN'T HEAR
THE MUSIC
...?!



MAKE THE WITCH'S BROOM

WHEN WE
AREN'T
EVEN ALLOWED
TO SPEAK...
WHEN WE
CAN'T
COMMUNICATE
WITH WORDS

...

ARE WE
REALLY
GOING TO
BE ABLE TO
PLAY HUMAN
CAT'S
CRADLE?!

**I DON'T
EVEN KNOW
WHERE
THE SAND
IS...!!!**

**HOW CAN I
SCRATCH
THE SAND
LIKE THIS...**



**THIS
SAND-
COLLECT-
ING JUST
TURNED
INTO A
SERIOUS
GAME OF
CHICKEN
...!!!**

**I
CAN'T
SEE...
THE
SAND
!!!**

**JUST
WHEN I
THOUGHT
THIS WOULD
SIMPLY BE
A WAR OF
ATTRITION,
BY TAKING
LITTLE BITS
OF SAND...**

CHAPTER 18: WHAT OF IT?

THIS IS
BLIND
"CRUMBLING
SAND
MOUNTAIN"
!!

THE
FIRST
TEAM
WHO'S
FLAG
FALLS
WILL BE
WIPE
OUT...

IT'S A
DEATH
MATCH
BETWEEN
FOUR
TEAMS!!

NOW
—

I'VE
GOTTA
SURVIVE
WHILE
BLIND-
FOLDED...



IT IS
THE
1ST
ROUND





AKASHI-KUN,
LISTEN
TO ME!!

WHAT
DO
I...

HEY,
AKA-
SHI-
KUN!

!

RUI-
CHAN ?



OH, RIGHT!
EVEN IN
DARKNESS,
I CAN HEAR.

AH
...

IT'LL BE
OKAY IF
YOU JUST
WALK AS
WE TELL
YOU!



WE'LL TELL
YOU HOW
FAR AWAY
THE SAND
PILE IS...

CALM
DOWN
...!

ONE
MISTAKE
AND I MIGHT
KNOCK OVER
THE FLAG...

FOR
EXAMPLE,
EVEN
IF I WALK
FORWARD
SEARCHING
WITH MY
HANDS...



THEN
WE'RE
ALL
DEAD...

CRAP!
I'M
SCARED
...

I CAN'T
MAKE A
SINGLE
CARELESS
STEP
FORWARD
!!!

THIS
IS
IMPOS-
SIBLE...
NO
FALSE
MOVES
...

**THE TEAM'S
VOICES
BECOME A
LIGHTHOUSE**

...

THE
TABLE IS
90 CM
HIGH, AND
THE PILE
IS 150 CM
HIGH...

TRUST
OUR
VOICES
AND MOVE
FORWARD
SLOWLY.
NO NEED
TO RUSH.

I'D
ESTIMATE
THAT IT'S
A LITTLE
OVER 2
METERS
TO THE
PILE.

THIS
IS A
TEAM
BATTLE
...

WE'RE
COUNTING
ON YOU...
JUST DON'T
TOUCH THE
FLAG...

THAT'S
RIGHT
!!

IF YOU
MESS UP,
THEN WE
DIE TOO
!!

START
WITH
THE
FIRST
STEP!!

YOU
CAN
DO IT,
AKA-
SSHI
!!

...

**THAT
GUIDES
THE BLIND
PLAYER
THROUGH
THE
AUDITION!!**

SO THAT'S
WHAT THIS
GAME IS
ABOUT...!!

YOU CAN'T
CLEAR IT
ALONE!!

...
OKAY.





TRUST
THEIR
VOICES AND
GENTLY,
SOFTLY...
AS LITTLE AS
POSSIBLE...

ONLY A
SCRATCH

ONLY A... SCRATCH?



HEY
...

HUH
...?



SORA-
JIROU
TORA-
HAMA

NORTH
MOUN-
TAIN...

BEED

WHEW

I
DID-

"6
GRAMS"

JURIA
MORI-
FUKU

WEST
MOUN-
TAIN...

BEED

AH

HAH

"43
GRAMS"

YASUTO
AKASHI

SOUTH
MOUN-
TAIN...

BEED

...

"420
GRAMS"

KATSU-
TOSHI
KAMATA

EAST
MOUN-
TAIN...

BEED

HM?

"21
GRAMS"





THE KANJI
FOR "WHITE"
IS THE KANJI
FOR "100" WITH
THE KANJI FOR "1"
TAKEN FROM IT...
IN OTHER WORDS,
"100" MINUS "1."
... "99"...

AND
THE WORD
FOR "SQUID"
CAN ALSO
MEAN
"BELOW."

THE
WHITE SQUID
WILL BE
SQUASHED



THAT'S
A RULE
FOR THIS
AUDITION.

"THE
WHITE
SQUID
WILL BE
SQUASH-
ED"...

YOU
COULD
RE-
PHRASE
IT LIKE
THAT.

"IF YOU
TAKE LESS
THAN 100
GRAMS OF
SAND, THEN
YOU WILL BE
SQUASHED
AND DIE."

THAT'S
WHAT
IT
REALLY
MEANS.

"BELOW
99
WILL BE
SQUASH-
ED."

ON TOP OF
THAT, YOU
TOOK 420
GRAMS WHICH
PUTS US AT A
DISTINCT
DISADVANTAGE...
THIS SUCKS...

BUT NOW
YOU'VE
CLEARED
AND
EVERYONE
KNOWS
ABOUT IT.

OH, I GET IT...

BASICALLY, YOU HAVE
TO TAKE MORE THAN
100 GRAMS...

IT WOULD
HAVE BEEN
ADVANTAGEOUS
FOR THE IDIOTS
WHO DIDN'T
NOTICE THIS
RULE TO DIE...

BUT
WERE
JUST
GOING TO
ABANDON
AKASHI-
KUN?!

DOES
THAT
MEAN
YOU
KNEW
...

OH...
SORRY...
BUT YOU
DON'T
HAVE TO
CALL US
IDIOTS...

I WAS JUST
TAKING THE
NECESSARY
MEASURES
TO ENSURE
THAT I MYSELF
SURVIVED...

THAT
SHOULDN'T BE
A REASON TO
CRITICIZE ME.

WHAT
OF
IT?

I'M A
RATIONALIST
WHO WON'T DO
ANYTHING IF
THERE'S NOTHING
IN IT FOR ME.

YOU MAY CALL
US A TEAM, BUT
IN THE END,
WE'RE JUST A
GROUP OF
INDIVIDUALS
WHO CAN'T TRUST
EACH OTHER...

I SAW YOUR
PANTIES
JUST NOW.
YOU OKAY
WITH THAT?

YOU'RE
A SMART
ONE, MS.
I'M-ALL-
TALK! ♡

...THAT'S
A LIE.
YOU CAN'T
HAVE SEEN
THEM.

IF YOU
HAD DIED,
THEN MY
CHANCES
OF
SURVIVAL
WOULD BE
HIGHER.

YOU'RE
LYING
AGAIN...

THEY'RE
BEIGE,
RIGHT?

DON'T
BE
SHY

THAT
WAS
JUST MY
LINE OF
REASON-
ING.





THE WHITE SQUID
WILL BE
SQUASHED

SHUT UP
AND QUIT
COMPLAIN-
ING OVER
THERE!!



LET'S
GO!
ROUND
2 NOW!

WHO
ARE THE
NEXT
SAND-
COLLEC-
TORS
!!

THE RULES
ARE WRITTEN
RIGHT HERE.
SO THERE'S
NO USE
ARGUING!
YOU
BONEHEADS!



SUR-
VIVORS
WILL
RETURN
TO THEIR
SEATS!!



RAISE
YOUR
HANDS!!



NO ONE
WILL DO
IT OF
THEIR
OWN
FREE
WILL...

SO
THAT'S
HOW IT
IS...

TAKING
MORE THAN
100 GRAMS
WITH OUR EYES
COVERED...
NOW THAT WE
KNOW ABOUT
SUCH A
DIFFICULT
RULE...



し...ん...
SILENCE...

WE'LL
SEE
WHETHER
OR NOT
I'M ALL
TALK...

SWIP...
すわ...

I...

WILL
DO
IT.

YOU
STUPID
GIRL.

SHE'S
SO
BEEF
...!!!

THIS
GIRL...

WHAT
...?!



CHAPTER 19: I LOVE YOU!



THAT'S
CLEARLY
WAY TOO
MUCH...



JUDGE-
MENT!!



TIME'S
UP!





JINPEI
KIRIYA

...

103
GRAMS

OK!

DA-DUN

WAAH!

JUST
LEAVE
THIS
GAME OF
SAND-
COLLECT-
ING TO ME!!

I'LL
TAKE
100
GRAMS,
NO
SWEAT!!

WAAH!

WE'RE
COUNT-
ING ON
YOU!!

WHOA
!!

N-
NICE!
BUT HOW
DID
YOU...

W-
WOW!!
SO CLOSE
TO 100!!

MY OLD
MAN OWNS
A GROCERY
STORE...

SO I
GREW UP
HAVING THE
WEIGHT OF
A HANDFUL
OF KATSUO-
BUSHI*
DRUMMED
INTO MY
BODY.

*DRIED, FERMENTED, AND
SMOKED SOFTBACK TUNA



THAT
MEANS
I'M
NEXT,
HUH?



EAST
MOUNTAIN



I
DON'T
MIND.

LET'S
TAKE
TURNS
GOING
CLOCK-
WISE.



RAISE
YOUR
HANDS!



THE SAND-
COLLEC-
TORS FOR
ROUND 3..



LET'S
GO
CLOCK-
WISE
TOO.



I
KNOW.



WE'RE
COUNT-
ING ON
YOU,
LEADER.



WEST
MOUNTAIN

DECEASED

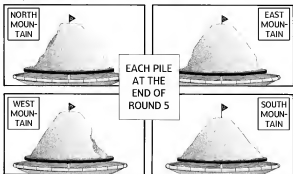






ROUND 4









COURAGE
HOW?
YOU'RE
JUST
IGNORING
YOUR OWN
FAULTS!!

THE ONLY
REASON WE'RE
IN THIS MESS
IS BECAUSE
YOU TOOK SO
MUCH SAND
EARLIER!!



I'VE GOT
THE FEEL
OF 100
GRAMS...

BUT...

FOR HOW MUCH
LONGER...?!
HOW MANY GRAMS
IS THE DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN OURS
AND THE OTHER
PILES...?!



DO I
HAVE TO
CHEAT
DEATH...?!

HOW
MANY
MORE
TIMES...



WHAT
OF
IT?

WHY
DON'T
YOU
VOLUN-
TEER
THEN?



WITHOUT
MAKING A
SINGLE
MISTAKE
...?!!



WILL I
BE ABLE
SURVIVE
UNTIL
THEN...

JUST
CONCEN-
TRATE
AND TAKE
IT ROUN
BY ROUN



!

DON'T
THINK
TOO MUCH
ABOUT IT,
AKASHI.



CONFI-
DENCE
MEANS
HAVING
FAITH IN
YOUR-
SELF.

DON'T
WAVER.
DON'T
LOSE
CONFI-
DENCE.



THAT'S
RIGHT
LMA
...

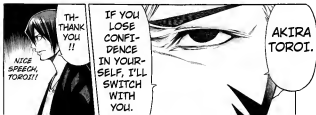


O-
OKAY.

NICE
SPEECH,
TOROI!!!

TH-
THANK
YOU
!!

IF YOU
LOSE
CONFI-
DENCE
IN YOUR-
SELF, I'LL
SWITCH
WITH
YOU.



AKIRA
TOROI.

HEY, HEY, HEY! YOU PUNKS!!
HOW LONG ARE YOU GONNA
TAKE THESE PUNY AMOUNTS?

FWHUMP!!

?!!

WHADDA
BUNCH
OF
SCAREDY
CATS!!

WHAT
...?!

HUH
...

WHA-?!

IT'LL
TAKE
AGES
...

AT
THIS
RATE
...



HE'S
MESS-
ING
IT ALL
UP...

TO
FINISH
!!!

THIS
MON-
KEY
...!!!

BAM



ANGRY
IS UGLY!

STOP,
ANGRY
MONKEY!



USHI-
MITSU
...!!



LET'S
HURRY
UP WITH
THE SAND-
COLLECT-
ING.



I'LL
VOLUN-
TEER
NEXT.



LET'S
GO!
ROUND
6!!!

BEGIN
!!!

OH, I
REALLY
CAN'T
SEE
ANY-
THING!



WE'RE
COUNT-
ING ON
YOU!

I LOVE
YOU,
AKASHI!
YOU CAN
DO IT!!

ONE
MORE STEP
FORWARD,
AKASHI-
KUN!!

GOOD.
STOP.



ABOUT
THIS
MUCH...
HUH?

THE
SMALLEST
AMOUNT...

...



IS THE
MEASURE
OF YOUR
FEAR.

EVERY
GRAM
OVER
100...



ALL I CAN DO
IS CONTROL
MY HESITATION
AS MUCH AS I
CAN...

I'LL PUT
A LITTLE
SAND FROM
MY RIGHT
HAND
BACK...!!

IN ORDER
TO WIN...

IN ORDER
TO LIVE...





WE'LL
SURVIVE
TOGETHER,
RIGHT?

RIGHT
?

WE'LL
GRAB
HOLD OF
VICTORY,
RIGHT?
RIGHT
?

HUH
?
HUH
?





**WHAT
THE
HELL IS
USHI-
MITSU
DOING
...?!!**

**WHAT
?!**

**WHAT
?!**

CHAPTER 20 YOU'RE ALL
GONNA MAKE ME SAY IT?









AFTER ALL,
HE'S THE
KIND OF GUY
WHO LIKES TO
SEE PEOPLE
DIE...

HE MUST HAVE
SOME KIND
OF PLAN IN
MIND....

WAIT A
SECOND...
USHIMITSU
WOULDN'T
HAVE DONE
THAT
WITHOUT
A REASON,
RIGHT?



WE'LL GRAB
HOLD OF
VICTORY,
RIGHT?

WE'LL
SURVIVE
TOGETHER,
RIGHT?

I LOVE
YOU!

AKA-
SHI...

RIGHT?

RIGHT?



IT MUST
HAVE
BEEN
SOME
KIND OF
MESSAGE
FOR ME.

HE'S
STARING
RIGHT
AT ME
...!!

DON'T
VOLUN-
TEER
AGAIN!
EVER!!

YA
HERE
ME?!
HURRY
AND SIT
DOWN!!

WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING?
YOU'RE
GONNA
GET US
KILLED!

AH!

HE
SAID
SOME-
THING
LIKE
THAT...

!



HUH...?!

AAH...!!

IS THAT
POSSIBLE
?!!

COULD
IT BE...



"THE
FEELING OF
100 GRAMS"...
THE
"CENT-SENSE"
AS IT WERE...

IS WHAT
WE HAVE
STARTED TO
ACQUIRE IN
OUR EYES AND
AKASHI'S
HANDS...

WE'RE
ALL
DESPERATE
TO FIGURE
OUT A WAY
TO REGAIN
THE LOSS
WE TOOK
IN THE
FIRST 2
ROUNDS.

IT'S
THAT
WAY
FOR US
RIGHT
NOW,
ISN'T
IT?

IN ORDER
TO INSTILL
THE
IMPORTANCE
OF "CENT-
SENSE" IN
HIS TEAM...

HE WAS
INTENTIONALLY
PLAYING
THE
FOOL.

IF THE
ENTIRE TEAM
DOESN'T
SHARE THIS
"CENT-SENSE,"
THEN THEY
WON'T
MAKE ANY
PROGRESS
IN THE
GAME...

BUT THE
OTHER TEAMS
ARE IN THE
LEAD, SO THEY
DON'T CARE IF
THEY GO
OVER BY A
LITTLE...

SURELY
...

AND
SO, THE
TEAM THAT
KNOWS "THE
FEELING OF
100 GRAMS"
WILL CERTAINLY
HAVE AN
ADVANTAGE
IN THE
ENDGAME.

YOU KNEW
THAT TOO, AND
THAT'S WHY YOU
INTENTIONALLY
TOOK TOO MUCH
EARLIER?!

OH!!
COULD
IT BE
...

WELL,
HE IS
CAPABLE
OF ANY-
THING.

I
SEE
...



THAT
IS SO
A LIE!!
YOU
DECIDED
THAT JUST
NOW!!

YOU
SAW WHAT
USHIMITSU
DID AND
JUST
HAPPENED
TO THINK
OF IT RIGHT
NOW!



...
HUH?

...
OH...

THAT'S
RIGHT.



WHAT
OF
IT?

...



YOU REALLY
ARE JUST
ALL TALK,
HUH?
NATSU-
MEGU...

BUT
NOW THE
NORTH
MOUNTAIN
HAS TAKEN
3207
GRAMS!!

WE'VE
ONLY TAKEN
1856. SO
GOING BY
THE AMOUNT
OF SAND,
WE'RE
AHEAD OF
THEM!!



HUH?
YOU...

WE'RE
KEEPING
TRACK OF
THE SAND
THAT WAS
TAKEN?

I GOT
A NAME,
YOU
KNOW!
I'M
SUSAN
HANA
NISHIO.

I GO
BY
SUSIE
...



BUT THAT'S
AWESOME!!
WE CAN
DO IT!!
WE CAN
STILL DO
IT!!

WELL,
I DON'T
KNOW
HOW MUCH
FELL ON
THE FLOOR,
BUT...

FOR
REAL?
THAT'S
AMAZING,
SUSIE!!



YOU THINK
YOU'RE
SOMETHING
'CUZ YOU
CAN COUNT?

SHUT
UP,
YOU
HAG!



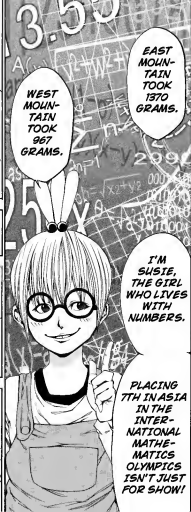
"HAG"
...

NOW
YOU'VE
DONE
IT.



WILL
YOU
STILL
CALL
ME A
HAG...?

BUT
WHEN
YOU
SEE
THIS
...



WEST
MOUN-
TAIN
TOOK
967
GRAMS.

EAST
MOUN-
TAIN
TOOK
1370
GRAMS.

I'M
SUSIE,
THE GIRL
WHO LIVES
WITH
NUMBERS.

PLACING
7TH IN ASIA
IN THE
INTER-
NATIONAL
MATHE-
MATICS
OLYMPICS
ISN'T JUST
FOR SHOW!



**COOL
IT,
EVERY-
ONE!**



DON'T
GET OB-
SESSED
WITH
THE 100
GRAM
RULE.

"HOW MANY
GRAMS WERE
TAKEN" IS
SIMPLY AN
EASY WAY TO
ASSESS THE
SITUATION.

THE
RULE IS
TO NOT
KNOCK
OVER THE
FLAG.



TAKE
A LOOK
AT THE
OTHER
FILES.

IT'S THE
SHAPE
AND
BALANCE
OF THE
FILE.

THAT'S
NOT THE
MOST
IMPORTANT
THING IN
THIS SAND-
COLLECTING
GAME...



IT'S TIME
FOR EACH
TEAM TO
START
THINKING
ALONG
THOSE
LINES.

JUST
TAKING
THIS INTO
ACCOUNT,
YOU CAN SEE
THAT EACH
ONE IS A
LITTLE BIT
DIFFERENT,
RIGHT?

"WHETHER
TO TAKE SAND
FROM THE
RIGHT SIDE...
FROM THE
LEFT SIDE...
FROM THE TOP
OR BOTTOM..."



IF IT
CRUMBLES
AND THE
FLAG
FALLS,
THEN
IT'S GAME
OVER.

NO
MATTER
HOW
LARGE
THE
PILE
IS...

WE SHOULD
LEAVE THE
"CENT-SENSE"
TO AKASHI
AND WORK ON
ACCURATELY
ASCERTAINING
THE PILE.



DO
YOUR
BEST
...



AKA-
SHI-
KUN
...

SAND-
COLLEC-
TORS
FOR
ROUND
7!!



RAISE
YOUR
HANDS
!!!



ARE
YOU
OKAY
?!

AKASHI-
KUN...?

!



WHAT'S
WRONG,
AKASHI
?!



THERE'S
CONCERN
THAT IT
CAN
SHORTEN
YOUR
LIFESPAN.

I'M
TETSUYA
OOTORI,
SON OF THE
DIRECTOR
OF OOTORI
HOSPITAL.
IF I SAY
SO, THEN
THERE'S
NO DOUBT
ABOUT IT.

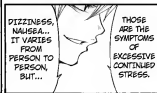
YOU
REALLY
MUST NOT
PUSH
YOURSELF
TOO HARD,
AKASHI.



WELL...
I DON'T
REALLY
KNOW,
BUT...

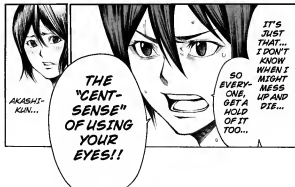
IT'S MY
TEMPLES
...

I FEEL
A BIT
LIGHT-
HEADED...



DIZZINESS,
NAUSEA...
IT VARIES
FROM
PERSON TO
PERSON,
BUT...

THOSE
ARE THE
SYMPTOMS
OF
EXCESSIVE
CONTINUED
STRESS.





JUDGE- MENT !!!









WILL
YOU
LET ME
CON-
TINUE...

COLLECT-
ING SAND
LIKE THIS
UNTIL THE
VERY END?

COUGH

I WANT
TO DO
IT...

TO BE
HONEST,
MY MIND
AND BODY
ARE AT
THEIR
LIMIT...

AND
I THINK
EVERY-
ONE'S GOT
A HANDLE
ON "CENT-
SENSE,"
BUT...

**AKASHI-
KUN
BECAME...**

**SOMEONE
VERY
SPECIAL
TO ME...**



AKA-
SHI-
KUN
...

WHAT
DO I
DO?

I
DON'T
WANT
HIM
TO
DIE
...



AT
FIRST,
IT WAS
JUST
FUN TO
BE WITH
HIM...

BEFORE
I KNEW
IT...

THAT'S
ALL IT
WAS,
BUT...

**SAND-
COLLEC-
TORS,
RAISE
YOUR
HANDS!!!**



**ROUND
8!!
LET'S
GO!!**

**I'LL LEAVE IT TO
YOU!! I LOVE
YOU, MAN!!**

**YOU'RE OUR ACE!
KEEP GOING
TO THE END!**

**OKAY, YOU WIN...
AS LONG AS YOU'RE
GONNA DO IT, I'LL
TRUST YOU**

**AKASSHI!!
I BELIEVE IN YOU!!**

**I BELIEVE
IN YOU...**

**AKASHI-
KUN!!**

...

**RELAX,
AKASHI...
WE'LL HELP
OUT YOUR
"CENT-
SENSE"
WITH OUR
EYES...**

**WE
DEFI-
NITELY
WON'T
LET YOU
DIE....!!**

**GO
ON!!
YOU CAN
DO IT!!**



...?

I'M
WOUNDED
ALL OVER
AND I'M
TRYING TO
DO THE
IMPOSSIBLE
HERE...



YOU'RE
JUST
GONNA
TAKE MY
WORDS
AT FACE
VALUE
...?

C'MON
NOW,
SOME-
ONE
PICK UP
ON IT...



...
AH,
MAN
...



THAT'S
HOW
YOU'RE
ALL
GONNA
BE...?

?



THEN MOVE
ON WITH
SOMEONE ELSE
VOLUNTEER-
ING IN MY
PLACE,
RIGHT?

USUALLY,
YOU'D
STOP ME
AT A TIME
LIKE THIS,
RIGHT?



FINE,
THEN
I'LL
SAY
IT...

HEH?
YOU'RE
ALL
GONNA
MAKE
ME SAY
IT?

WHAT
ARE
YOU...

...?

WHAT'S
WRONG,
AKASHI
...?

**I
REALLY
DON'T
WANT...**

**TO DO
THIS
ANY-
MORE!**



...
HUH?



AND NOW...
YOU SAY...
YOU DON'T
WANT TO
DO IT
ANYMORE?

DIDN'T
YOU TELL
US TO LET
YOU BE THE
SAND-
COLLECTOR
UNTIL THE
VERY END?

HUH...?
WHAT
DO YOU
MEAN?

AS THE GODS WILL

THE SECOND SERIES

SO I
TRIED TO
PUT ON
AN ACT
LIKE
USHIMITSU,
BUT...

ANYWAY,
WHY AM I
THE ONLY
ONE WHO
HAS TO
DO IT?

WELL...
YOU SEE...
TO BE
HONEST...

IT WOULD BE
LAME TO SAY
"I'M AT MY
LIMIT."
SOMEONE
TAKE MY
PLACE..."

CAN'T YOU
GUYS SEE
THAT?
YOU'RE SO
OBLIVIOUS...

はあ...
STGH...

WRITTEN BY
MUNEYUKI KANESHIRO

ART BY
AKIO FURUKURA

CHAPTER 21: ZERO CONNECT

BUT IF I HAD TOLD
YOU HONESTLY THAT
I DON'T WANT TO DO IT,
THEN EVERYONE'S
MORALE WOULD HAVE
DROPPED, RIGHT?

AND THEN
IF SOMEONE
MESSES
UP AND THE
FLAG FALLS,
THEN YOU'LL
ALL THINK
I'M TERRIBLE.

HOW ARE
YOU GOING
TO MAKE UP
FOR IT
WHEN I
TRUSTED
YOUR WORDS,
EVEN FOR
A MOMENT
BACK
THERE!?

THAT'S
BECAUSE YOU
TOLD US TO
LET YOU DO IT!

SUMMARY: AOSHIMA WAS TRYING HIS BEST TO FIGHT HIS LIGHT-HEADEDNESS,
BUT HE'S ACTUALLY REALLY WORRIED AND JUST WANTED TO TRADE OFF...

THAT'S
ENOUGH
NOW,
NAFUSHI-
MAGU!

ENOUGH

YOU DON'T
THINK YOURS
LOWERING
MORALE
RIGHT NOW?!

WHAT?
WHAT
KIND OF
MORON
ARE
YOU?!

WHAT?!

WE'LL
DO IT
ON OUR
OWN.

LEAVE
THE
SCUM
ALONE.

SCUM... SCUM...

DON'T
BUTT IN
ANYMORE!

SHUT UP,
YOU
LOSER!!!

A-
ANY-
WAY,
NOW
LET'S

HEAR...
SCUM?

SOMEONE
VOLUNTEER
AS SAND-
COLLECTOR
FOR
ROUND 8!

HURRY
IT
UP!!



AND
AKASHI
...

YOU WON'T
DO IT
ANYMORE.
JUST SIT
QUIETLY.

WE'RE JUST
GOING TO
KEEP DOING
WHAT WE'VE
BEEN DOING.

LOOKING AT
THE OTHER
FILES,
I'D SAY WE
CAN AIM
AT ABOUT
120 GRAMS
WITHOUT
BEING TOO
EXACT.

AKASHI-KUN
ISN'T BE
THE ONE TO
GET FREAKED
OUT BY
SOMETHING
AS EASY.

WHAT IF
SOMETHING
HAPPENED
TO AKASHI-
KUN?

THAT'S
WHAT
HE
SAID...

THAT
MOMENT
HE CAN
DEFIN-
ITELY
HEAR.

RELAX...

HE
SAID
IT'D
BE
FINE...

OKAY...

LET'S
DO
THIS.

HOW-
EVER
...

REALLY
GET
FREAKED
OUTING

OR
DID
HE
...

EVERYONE
WHO'S NOT
THE SAND-
COLLECTOR
WILL TRUST
IN THEIR
"CENT-SENSE"
AND ASSIST
BY WHAT
THEY CAN
SEE.

SOUND
GOOD?



FROM
THAT
TURN
ON...

THE ROLE
OF SAND-
COLLECTOR
FOR THE
SOUTH
MOUNTAIN
WAS CARRIED
OUT MATTER-
OF-FACTLY.

IN SPITE
OF THE
MEMBERS'
IRRITATION...



NOT A
SINGLE
PERSON
PANICS!

NO ONE
RUSHES!

ON THE
CONTRARY

BE COOL.
BE COOL.

DON'T
MESS UP
JUST 'CUZ
YOU'RE
MAD AT
AKASHI.



AT
THE
SAME
TIME...

THE NORTH
MOUNTAIN,
WHICH WAS
IN A TIGHT
SPOT FROM
USHIMITSU'S
CARELESSNESS



AND THERE
WERE A FEW
VICTIMS OF
NEGLIGENCE

NEEDED
TO AIM
NARROWLY
FOR 100
GRAMS...



IRONICALLY

FROM
ISOLATING
AKASHI...

MAYBE AN
EXQUISITE
SENSE OF UNITY
WAS BORN.



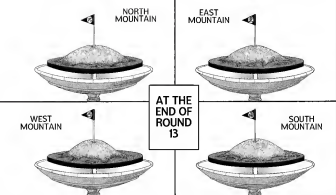
"PUT UP
A GOOD
FIGHT!"

THEY
REPEATED
OVER AND
OVER,
AND THE
RESULTS
WERE...

"CARRY
ON
BRAVELY!"



AKASHI
1RD YEAR
HIGH
SCHOOL
STUDENT
HE'S
DIGHTING
TO MEET
HIS BEST
FRIEND
ADYAMA,
REFIED
FROM
CORRUPTION
OF BEING
THE GAND-
COLLECTOR





AND
SO, THE
SITUATION
REACHED A
BALANCE...



BY
ROUND
15...

THE WEST
MOUNTAIN
ALSO
GRASPS
"CENT-
SENSE".



NONE
OF THEM
YIELDED!

THE
EAST,
SOUTH,
WEST,
AND
NORTH...



WAS
REACHING
IT'S FINAL
STAGE.

THE
AUDITION
FOR SAND-
COLLECTOR...



THAT MEANS
WE CAN WIN!
IF WE CAN
GET THROUGH
THIS ROUND,
WE CAN WIN!!

LET'S
KNOCK
IT
OVER
NOW!

PFEW!
PFEW!

PFEW!

IT'S
TRUE...

WHETHER OR
NOT THEY HAVE
ENOUGH SAND
FOR ONE MORE
ROUND...
THE FLAG WILL
DEFINITELY
FALL OVER
IF THEY TAKE
ANY.



IF YOU CAN
DO IT,
THEN THAT
DECIDES
WHO WINS.

WE
BELIEVE
IN YOU!

I
TRUST
YOU,
TORO!

LET'S
GO!!!

HEY!
ROUND
22!!!

IT'S ALL
BEEN FOR
NOTHING
IF YOU
KNOCK
IT OVER!

LAST
ONE!
FOCUS!

I'M UP
FOR THE
LAST
ROUND,
HUH?

HEH...

LET'S
DO
THIS!

DO
YOUR
BEST...

BEGIN!!!





YES!
WELL
DONE!!

YOU...
YOU
DID IT!!!

W-
WOW!!

FREEZE...
0

...

Huh...

Huh...

AH...

LIGHT!

7-5

YES!!

STOP
MOVING
...!!





I'M
DONE.

!!?



!!



ALL
GOOD
FRIENDS
WITH
AKASHI

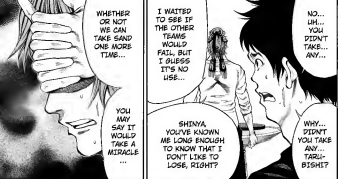


JUDGE-
MENT!!!



USHIMITSU
AN ECCENTRIC
PERSON
LOVES
AKASHI

...?
WHA...?



WHETHER
OR NOT
WE CAN
TAKE SAND
ONE MORE
TIME...

YOU
MAY
SAY IT
WOULD
TAKE A
MIRACLE
...

I WAITED
TO SEE IF
THE OTHER
TEAMS
WOULD
FAIL, BUT
I GUESS
IT'S NO
USE...

SHINYA,
YOU'VE KNOWN
ME LONG ENOUGH
TO KNOW THAT I
DON'T LIKE TO
LOSE, RIGHT?

NO...
UH...
YOU
DIDN'T
TAKE...
ANY...

WHY...
DIDN'T
YOU TAKE
ANY...
TARU-
BISHI?



WIN, SHINYA.
IT'S UP TO YOU...
YOU CAN DO IT
EVEN IF YOU'RE
THE ONLY ONE.

WHAT
ARE
YOU...?
H-H?

WH...

WE CAN'T
WIN UNLESS
YOU MAKE
THAT
MIRACLE
HAPPEN...



**I'M
LAYING
DOWN
MY LIFE
FOR
YOU.**

EAST
MOUNTAIN,
GOU
TARUBISHI

0
GRAMS



WHAT
A GLY
...!

EXCHANGING
HIS LIFE...
FOR A
ROUND'S
WORTH
OF SAND.

HE
PULLED
OFF A
"ZERO
CONNECT,"
ADVANCING
WITH 0
GRAMS!!!

IF THAT'S
POSSIBLE,
THEN...



TARU-
BISHI

...



TARUBI...
SHI...

AH...



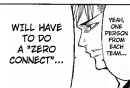
ADVANCING
TO THE
NEXT
ROUND
WITH 0
GRAMS??

HE'S
—

IS THAT...
EVEN
ALLOWED?!

HOW
COULD
HE...?!

THE
WHITE
SAND
WILL
BE
FOULISHED?





**IN OTHER
WORDS,
THE NEXT
VOLUNTEER...**

**WILL
DIE FOR
THEIR
TEAM'S
VICTORY.**

**SAND-
COLLECTORS
VOLUNTEER!**

**ALRIGHT!
LET'S GO!
ROUND
23!!!**





BECAUSE
I'LL GO!



AKASHI-
KUROKO

HUH?



IF
AKASHI'S
GOING...

THEN
SO
WILL
I.

IT'S NOT OVER YET!
THOUGH THE EDITOR KUNAI
AT THIS POINT THE LOSER
AND THE ECCENTRIC HAVE
CAUSE A BURDEN TO BEAR
BUT WHAT IS THIS...?
MY HEART IS POUNDING...

TO BE CONTINUED...

AS THE GODS WILL

THE SECOND SERIES

I WON'T
LET
EVERY-
ONE'S
EFFORT
GO TO
WASTE.

I WILL
FIGHT
THE LAST
BATTLE.

THEN
I WILL
TOO.

HUH...
WHAT
DO
YOU
MEAN
...?

DIDN'T
YOU HEAR?
THE NEXT
VOLUNTEER
IS AS GOOD
AS DEAD!

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CHAPTER 22: LAST BATTLE

WRITTEN BY
MUNEYUKI KANESHIRO

ART BY
AKEMI FUJIMURA



I'LL GO
WITH
YOUR
IDEA,
TARU-
BISHI...!

I'M
GONNA
MAKE A
MIRACLE
HAPPEN!!

OKAY!!!



WHAT
ABOUT
THE
OTHER
TEAMS.
HUH?!



NOAH
...?!

AAARGHH!!
ああー!!

WHAT
THE HELL!
I'LL DO
IT!

I'LL DO
IT FOR
THE WEST
MOUNTAIN!!

SUMMARY: EAST MOUNTAIN'S TARUBISHI AVOIDED HIS TEAM'S DEFEAT WITH A "ZERO CONNECT" CHOOSING TO KILL HIMSELF WITHOUT TAKING ANY SAID AND NOW, ONE PERSON FROM EACH OF THE THREE REMAINING TEAMS MUST ALSO DO A "ZERO CONNECT" WHILE EVERYONE ELSE HESITATES, AASIN AND USHIMATSU RAISE THEIR HANDS!



NOAH...

NO...

I'LL GO
BEFORE
YOU,
JUBE...
LET'S PUT
THE BAND
TOGETHER
AGAIN IN
THE NEXT
WORLD...!



SOME-
BODY'S
GOTTA
DO THE
"ZERO
CONNECT!"



AKA-
SSHE...
ARE YOU
SERIOUS-
CUST?



WHAT
ARE YOU
GONNA
DO?



HUH...
WAIT...



ALRIGHT
...



YOU HAVE
SOME
CHANCE OF
WINNING?!

AH!
COULD
IT BE...



START
ALREADY!
YOU
DANGLING
APE!!

I'M
GOING FOR
MY TEAM!
ALL TEAMS
ARE
ACCOUNTED
FOR,
RIGHT?!



HUH...?
AKASHI-
KUN?

HOW
...



THERE
IS A
WAY.

NO WAY...
NO MATTER
HOW YOU
THINK
ABOUT
IT...



VERY
WELL
-



I WON'T
LET
ANYONE
DIE.



A character with a mask and a device on their head, wearing a dark jacket and light pants, is shown in a dynamic pose. A speech bubble next to them says "NOW, BEGIN!!!".

NOW,
BEGIN!!!



A character with a device on their head is shown shouting with their mouth wide open. A speech bubble next to them says "LET'S GO! ROUND 23!!!".

LET'S
GO!
ROUND
23!!!

CLICK



A close-up of a character's face, looking serious. A speech bubble next to them says "AKASHI ...".

AKASHI
...

COULD
IT BE
YOU...



A character is shown in a room, looking surprised. A speech bubble next to them says "...!".

...!



A character with a shocked expression is shown. A speech bubble next to them says "WHAT DO WE DO... IT'S STARTED ALREADY?!".

WHAT DO
WE DO...
IT'S
STARTED
ALREADY?!



PLAN
TO MAKE
UP FOR
WHAT
YOU
DID?!

FOR THE
TEAM'S
VICTORY
...?!

SO NOW YOU
PLAN TO TAKE
RESPONSIBILITY
AND DIE
EXCHANGING
YOUR LIFE FOR
0 GRAMS...

YOU
CHICKENED
OUT ALL OF
A SUDDEN
AND
DISRUPTED
THE TEAM'S
HARMONY...



SER-
IOUSLY
...
YOU...

HUNT?

AKA-
SHI...

NO
WAY
...



ONE
PERSON
DIES SO
EVERYONE
ELSE CAN
LIVE...

I DON'T
HAVE A
PROBLEM
WITH THAT.

WELL,
IT
WORKED
OUT FINE,
DIDN'T
IT?

WHAT...
AKASHI-
KUN...

YOU
CAN'T...

WHERE
IS YOUR
HUMANITY?!!

WATSU-
MASHI,
YOU...!!





I COULDN'T DO
ANYTHING BY
MYSELF.
YOU'D ALWAYS
COME RUNNING
WHEN I WAS IN
TROUBLE...

YOU
WERE
THE
SURE-
MAN
THAT
WOULD
SAVE
ME...

OWAL EXAM
NO CHECKING



I'M
LAYING
DOWN
MY LIFE
FOR
YOU.

WHEN I LOOK
BACK...
WE'VE KNOWN
EACH OTHER
SINCE WE
WERE KIDS,
HUNT
ALL THAT TIME
UP TO NOW...

TARU-
BTSH...



IF I FEEL
YOUR
PRESENCE!!

IF ONLY
FOR THIS
MOMENT,
EVEN IN
DEATH...



YES...
IF IT'S THE
TWO OF US
TOGETHER...

I CAN
DO ANY-
THING
NOW!!



I'M NOT
AFRAID
ANY
MORE!!

THANK
YOU,
TARU-
BTSH...



YOUR
SPIRIT
STILL
LIVES
INSIDE
ME!!



IT'S
NOT

...

OH...
SO THAT'S
WHAT HE
MEANT?!

SO WE
WON,
DIDN'T
WE?!

AH...
WE
WON?

IT FELL!?
IT FELL
DOWN,
RIGHT?!

OVER
YET.

...
HUH?

HEY,
GAME
MAS-
TER!!

EAST
MOUN-
TAIN
KNOCKED
OVER
THEIR
FLAG!!

WE
WON!!
WE
DID
IT!!

AKASHI
PREDICTED
THIS AND
VOLUN-
TEERED!!
I CAN'T
BELIEVE
THAT
GUY!!!

SO, OF
COURSE
NO ONE
WILL
DIE
NOW!!

THE
GAME'S
OVER,
RIGHT?!





I'M
TRULY
GLAD TO
HAVE
MET
YOU...

W...
WE WON.
NOAH.
THANK
YOU...



FOR-
GET
YOU... SOB

I'LL
NEVER...



WEST
MOUN-
TAIN

19



UM,
JUDE
...

THANK
YOU...
I'M
GRATEFUL!
I'M SO
GRATEFUL!

IF IT
WEREN'T
FOR YOU,
I WOULDN'T
BE WHO I
AM NOW...

...

REALLY,
I WAS SO
HAPPY...

BEING
IN
100 Y.A.
WITH
YOU...



SORRY
IF I
MESS
UP...

ACTU-
ALLY...

I'M
GOING
TO
TAKE
SAND...

...
HUH?





**HE
MUST**

...

**DIE
NOW**

...

D-
DAMN
IT...

THE
SOUTH
AND NORTH
MOUNTAINS
ARE THE
ONLY ONES
LEFT...

BUT NO
MATTER
HOW YOU
THINK
ABOUT IT,
NEITHER
HAS ENOUGH
SAND LEFT
FOR ONE
MORE
TURN...

IT'S NO
USE...
NOW
AKASHI'S
PLAN IS
RUINED...
THERE'S
NOTHING
ELSE TO
DO...

IN ORDER
FOR NO ONE
ELSE TO DIE,
THE ONLY
THING
AKASHI
CAN DO...

IS CALL
"O GRAMS"
AND
LET THIS
SAND-
COLLECTING
GAME
END...



HUH
...

I THOUGHT
THE GAME
MIGHT END IF
ANOTHER FLAG
FELL FIRST...

SO...
IT WAS
NO USE
IN THE
END, HUH?

BUT IN
THE END,
WE STILL
HAVE TO
DO IT...

AKA-



IT'S
BECAUSE
OF WHAT
YOU TOLD
ME BEFORE
THAT I'M
STANDING
HERE
RIGHT
NOW...

HEY,
USHI-
MITSU
...



SO...
SHALL
WE?

THANKS,
MAN.

YOU'RE
WEL-
COME.



**YOU'RE
A LIAR,
AKASHI-
KUN...**

**YOU
PROMISED
WE'D STAY
TOGETHER...**

**I WANT
TO DO...**

**THERE'S
STILL SO
MUCH...**

**WAS
ONLY ABLE
TO MAKE IT
THIS FAR
BECAUSE I
WAS WITH
YOU...**

I...

**HEY...
WHAT
AM I
SUPPOSED
TO DO...**

**IF
YOU'RE
NOT
HERE...?**

**YOU
STILL
HAVEN'T
EVEN
GIVEN
ME YOUR
EMAIL
ADDRESS
YET...**

**WE
STILL
HAVEN'T
TALKED
ABOUT
OUR
FAVORITE
MUSIC
YET...**

**LET'S
SURVIVE
TOGETHER
AND GO TO
THE MOVIES
OR SOME-
THING...**

**STEP
BACK...**



**DON'T
DIE,
AKASHI-
KUN!!!**



**DON'T
LEAVE
ME
BEHIND...**



**I FELT
LIKE I
COULD GO
ON LIVING
IF IT WAS
WITH YOU,
AKASHI-
KUN!!**

**I DON'T
WANT
TO LIVE
IF IT HAS
TO BE
WITHOUT
YOU!!**

**WITHOUT
YOU...**

I LOV-



**THREE
MORE
SECONDS.
YOU
SLOW-
POKE!!**



**WAIT!
I STILL
...**

WAIT...





SAND
APPEARED!!
IS IT A
MIRACLE?!
A STRATEGY?!
AN ILLUSION?!

JUDGE-
MENT!!!

TO BE CONTINUED...

AS THE GODS WILL

THE SECOND SERIES

THEIR DESTINIES INTERSECT AT THE POINT BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH
THOSE PRESENT AT SCHOOL AND THOSE ABSENT

CHAPTER 23: NO ONE KNOWS YET -2

WRITTEN BY
MUNEYUKI KANESHIRO

ART BY
AKIHI FURIMURA



HE'S
EVEN
FOOLED
HIS
TEAM-
MATES...

WITH
THE
SAND
FOR
VICTORY.

!!?

THERE
SHOULDN'T
HAVE BEEN
ENOUGH
SAND TO
TAKE...



IF THAT'S
THE CASE,
THEN
AKASHI-KUN
AND
USHIMITSU...

SUMMARY: IT'S THE LAST ROUND OF
SAND-COLLECTING. TWO MEMBERS
WERE TO BE SACRIFICES FOR THEIR
TEAMS, WHEN SAND THAT SHOULDN'T
HAVE BEEN THERE APPEARED.



SAND
IN
THEIR
HANDS
...?!!



WERE
HOLD-
ING...

JUDGE-
MENT!!!



YASUTO
AKASHI
...



SOUTH
MOUN-
TAIN...



THUS, THE
AUDITION
FOR SAND-
COLLECTOR..



103
GRAMS



182
GRAMS

KIYOSHIROU
USHIMITSU...



NORTH
MOUNTAIN...



ANNOUNCES
THE
SOUTH
MOUNTAIN
AND
NORTH
MOUNTAIN
AS THE
VICTORS!!!



Y-
YESSS-
SSS!!

WH...
OOOH!!

OH
...?
OH HO
HO...

CLUCK



WE
MADE
IT...

AH...

STAY
HAR...



AKASHI-
KUN...!!!



BACK WHEN
USHIMITSU
WENT WILD
AND SAID
SOMETHING
STRANGE
TO ME...

THAT
WAS A
SIGN
DIRECTED
AT ME.

HUH?

A SIGNAL
THAT SAID
"GRAB
SOME
SAND."

I
LOVE
YOU!



USHIMITSU
TOLD ME
ABOUT IT.

WHEN
YOU
GRABBED
HOLD
OF THE
SAND...

THAT
WAS
WHEN YOU
DID IT.
RIGHT,
USHI-
MITSU?

IT WOULD
BE GOOD
TO STAY
OUT OF
PLAY
FOR A
WHILE...

AND
THEN IT
OCCURRED
TO ME...

h...
CLUTCH...

I KNEW
YOU'D
GET IT.

BAN...YEP.

A
SIGN
OF MY
LOVE.



SO I
PRETENDED
TO FEEL
DIZZY AND
STAGGERED...

AS A
WAY TO
TURN THE
TIDE IF
THE CHANCE
OF VICTORY
WAS SLIM
IN THE
ENDGAME!!!

THAT'S
WHEN I
GRABBED
HOLD OF
THE
SAND.



I LOOKED
LIKE A FOOL
CRYING LIKE
THAT! YOU
STUPID
IDIOT!!

WHY
DIDN'T
YOU
TELL
US?!

BUT
I DIDN'T
HAVE A
CHOICE!!

HEY,
I TRIED
TO TELL
YOU IT'D
BE FINE...



YEAH...
KINDA...

HUH...
THEN,
YOU
WERE
JUST
ACTING?



IT'S
REALLY
GOOD
THAT
NONE
OF YOU
FOUND
OUT.

AND
STAYED
QUIET
UNTIL
THE
END? ALL
OF
THAT?

LIKE
WHEN
YOU
CHICK-
ENED
OUT...

IF MIZARU FINDS OUT,
HE MIGHT
KILL US...

AND
BESIDES
...

SO
KEEP IT
DOWN...

IT WOULD
HAVE BEEN
POINTLESS
IF THE OTHER
TEAMS HAD
KNOWN THAT
I WAS
HOLDING
SAND....!!

11
てん てん
てん てん

!!!

HUH
...?

OH...
YOU'RE
RIGHT
...

GRAP!!

I DIDN'T
REALLY
THINK
ABOUT ALL
THAT...

THAT IT
WOULD GET
SO CLOSE
IN THE END...
AND EVEN
ABOUT THE
"ZERO
CONNECT"?

HUH...
SO
DOES THAT
MEAN YOU
PREDICTED
EVERYTHING
ELSE, AS
WELL...?

AND WHAT
WOULD YOU
HAVE DONE
IF ONE OF US
HAD MESSED
UP IN THE
MIDDLE...?

BUT IF
THE OTHER
TEAMS HAD
STILL HAD
ENOUGH SAND
FOR ONE MORE
ROUND, THEN
YOU WOULD
BE DEAD.

THAT'S
RIGHT...
YOUR
READING
WAS
SHORT-
SIGHTED
...

YOU
PREDICTED
THAT IT
WOULD BE
CLOSE IN
THE END...



YOU WERE
HOLDING
SAND WHILE
I WASN'T
LOOKING...?

YOU
MADE
A FOOL
OUT OF
ME...



HUH
...



WH-
THIS
AIN'T
GOOD...

IT APPEARS
YOU DON'T
UNDERSTAND
THE ESSENCE
OF MIZARU,
SO I'LL
TEACH
YOU...



USHI-
MITSU...
HAD A
BACK-UP
PLAN!!
WOAH....!!

AH...

UH...

HE HAD SAND
IN HIS RIGHT
HAND, TOO...?!
HE WAS HOLDING
100 GRAMS IN
EACH HAND...?!



BUT IF
IT CAME
TO THAT
...

I WOULDN'T
HAVE
HESITATED
TO OFFER
YOU THIS
HANDFUL.



HEY
—

USHI,
CHECK IT
—

YOU
GUYS
—

ER...
AH...
I SEE
...



CAN'T
BE
JUDGED."

"WHAT
GOES
UNSEEN..."



SO ENDS
THE SAND-
COLLECTING
EXAM.

12
PEOPLE
LIVE.



THE SURVIVING
HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENTS
ARE BEING
IMPRISONED
WITHIN GIANT
CUBES...

THE
GOVERNMENT
HAS
ANNOUNCED
108
CONFIRMED
CUBES
THROUGHOUT
JAPAN



SOMEONE
HAS HIJACKED
THE AIRWAVES
AND IS
BROADCASTING
FOOTAGE FROM
INSIDE THE
CUBES LIVE ON
JAPANESE
TELEVISION



CONSIDERING
FOOTAGE FROM
NEARBY CUBES...
IT'S LIKELY THAT
SOMETHING
SIMILAR IS
HAPPENING
WITHIN ALL
CUBES RIGHT
NOW...

METROPOLITAN
POLICE
DEPARTMENT,
ANTI-
TERRORISM
HEADQUARTERS



FURTHER-
MORE,
THESE CUBES
HAVE BEEN
CONFIRMED
ALL OVER
THE WORLD,
BUT...

THIS IS,
INSIDE THE
CUBES!
—A
MANNEREN
PIS' STATUE
AND...

THEY'RE
PLAYING
TUG OF WAR...
WE HAVE NO
IDEA WHAT
THE MEANING
BEHIND
THIS IS.

INTERPOL IS
TAKING THE
VIEWPOINT
THAT IT IS A
SIMULTANEOUS
OUTBREAK OF
WORLDWIDE
TERRORISM.

THE
MASTERMIND
BEHIND IT
REMAINS
SHROUDED
IN
MYSTERY...

11

I'M
WORKING,
MIKO-
SHIBA.

WE'RE BUSY
WITH THE
STRUCTURAL
ANALYSIS OF
THE CUBES
AROUND THE
COUNTRY.
WHY DON'T
YOU HURRY
AND MAKE A
LIST OF THE
SURVIVORS?

IT'S
THOUGHT
THAT SOME
KIND OF
SELECTION
PROCESS
IS TAKING
PLACE.

NEEDLESSLY
HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENTS
WORLDWIDE
ARE THE ONLY
ONES CAUGHT
UP IN THIS
EVENT.

AKASHI-
SAN...

HAVE YOU
GOTTEN
ANY NEWS
ABOUT
YOUR
SON...
YASUHIKO-
KUN?

AND
NOW...

OH!!

NO WONDER
THEY CALL HIM
"AKASHI THE
SWITCH"...

EVEN WITH
HIS SON
MISSING,
HE CAN
COMPLETELY
ALTERNATE
BETWEEN
PRIVATE
LIFE AND
WORK...!!

AKASHI-
SAN...!!
HE'S IN
TOTAL
WORK-
MODE!!

UH...

O-
OKAY!!

THERE ARE
SOME FIGURES
ON THE SURFACE
THE SURVIVING
HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENTS HAVE
FINISHED FIGHTING
AND ARE COMING
OUT!

JUST NOW
THERE'S
SOME
MOVEMENT
AT THE GATE
IN NORTHERN
TOKYO!

AH!!

ONE OF THE
SURVIVING
BOYS HAS
APPEARED...!!!

THE CROWD
IS GOING
ABSOLUTELY
WILD...!!

THE SCENE IS
NOW FULL OF
YOUNG PEOPLE
WORSHIPPING
THE SURVIVING
STUDENTS AS
"CHILDREN
OF GOD"...

YAGI-
TO...??

GOO'S
OOL-
DREH

GOO'S
OOL-
DREH

GOO'S
OOL-
DREH



NOW HE
HAS A
BOLD
SMILE
ACROSS
HIS
FACE...!!!

THE
BOY WHO
COULD BE
CALLED
THE FIRST
CHILD OF
GOD HAS
APPEARED!!!



FROM
OUR AERIAL
FOOTAGE,
WE CAN
ALSO SEE
SEVERAL
OTHER
PEOPLE...!!!

SOME
OF THEM
APPEAR
TO BE IN
A STATE
OF UTTER
DESPAIR!!



WHAT?!
THEY'RE
WORSHIP-
ING US?

WAAA-
AARGH!





ARE THE
ONES WHO
WERE
PRESENT
AT SCHOOL
ON THAT
FATEFUL
DAY...

IS THAT
THE
STUDENTS
TRAPPED
IN THE 108
CUBES...



THAT'S
MY
JOB.

YES!!

WHAT
THIS
MAN
DOESN'T
KNOW...



I'M
SORRY!

AND
THAT
THOSE
WHO
WERE
ABSENT,
LIKE HIS
SON...

ARE
GATHERED
IN THE
"TRASH
CAN"...

YOU
ALWAYS
CUTTING
CLOSE!

NOT TO MENTION...



!

THAT
DEEP
AT THE
BOTTOM
OF THE
SEA OF
JAPAN...



THAT
PLACE

IS
INSIDE
A
109TH
CUBE...

THAT
NO ONE
KNOWS
ABOUT
YET.

NOW
LET'S
SEE

"MAGAZINE: IT'S THE
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